The True lamentable discourse of the burning of *Teuerton in* Deuon-shire *the third day of* Aprill last past, about the hower of one of the Clocke in the after-noone being Market day, 1598.

BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA

At what time there was consumed to Ashes about the number of 400 houses with all the money and goods that was therein: and Fyftie persons burnt alive through the vehemencie of the same Fyer.

AT LONDON
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The

Unfortunate Wife.

The lamentable spoyle of *Teuerton*.

YT is not vnknowne to many, and chiefly to English Marchants that the Towne of Teuerton, in Deuon-shire, about Ten myles on this syde Exceter, was the chiefe Market for Cloth, that is in all the West parts of England: pleasantlye situate vppon the cleere running Ryuer of Exe: garnished with manye costlye and goodly buildinges, inhabited with diuers rich and wealthy Marchants: and so well peopled, as no other Towne (of the same bignesse) in all those quarters, could compare therewith: And by reason of ỹ Market kept therin euery Monday for Cloth, and other commodities, it was greatly frequented of all the countrey people neere adioyning, especially of Clothiers and such other persons as had any dealinges therein: where they were sure of sale, and to haue present money for their commodities were it neuer so much, where alwayes before dinner, they had their Coyne truely payde, which was no small benefit to all the poore men of the West partes, as Weauers, and Tuckers and such like. But such is the mutabillitie of fortune, and the vncertaintie of our most all state: that no man can make assurance of that hee hath, nor warrant his owne welfare one minute of an houer, as by this following example, and many other the like is manifest: For we may bee well assured, that the Third daye of Aprill last, when the rich Inhabitants of Teuerton rose in the morning May, when they were in the Market at Noone, they little thought that before night their wealth should haue been turned into such waste: but now behold a thing more wonderfull he which at one a clocke was worth fiue Thousand Pounds, is

as the Prophet saith, drunke his wine in bowles of fine Siluer plate, had not by two a Clocke so much as a wooden vessell left to eate his meate in, nay a house to couer his sorrowfull head, neyther did this happen to one man alone, but to many other, being neyther in danger of the crueltie of warres, nay on the Seas, where they might feare the furie of waters.

But when they thought themselues secure, and farre from any imminent perrill, in prime of the bright day, not whē their Towne was emptie, but when their streetes swarmed with store of people, not when they were a sleepe or naked in their beds, when they could not shift for themselues: but when they were awake, apparelled and fit for any businesse; Lothes (I say) sodenly, and it were in a twinkling of an eye, came this great griefe vppon them, which turn'd their wealth to miserable want, & their riches to vnlookt for pouertie: and how was that? many sir by fyer.

But no fyer from Heauen, no vnquenchable fyer, such as worthily fell on the sinfull Cities of Sodome and Gomora: but a sillie flash of fyer, blazing forth of a frying pan, the circumstance whereof I will briefly shew you.

The fyer first began at the West end of the Towne, on the farthest side of the fayre faire River, about one a clocke in the after noone, in the very prime, and chiefe of the Market, whē people were most busiest in the sale of their commodities. For there was dwelling in a little lowe thatched house a poore beggerly woman, who hadde got a companion fit for her purpose, I meane an other woman of the like condition. And they together went to bake pan-cakes with Strawes for their abilitie and prouision was so good, that there was no wood in the house to doe it. And as they were busie about their cookerie, sodenly the fyer got into the Pan, which also caught presently hould on the Strawe lying hard by, by meanes whereof the house being very low, was by the high blaze of the flame set on fyre in the very roofe, which by the force of an extreame vio-

high wind which blew strongly in ỳ West, kindled with such vehemencie, that their was no help for the same, the fier wherof tooke hould of a certaine hay-house neere adioyning, and from thence it paste to the Towne milles. The winde blowing still fiercely did drive the fier into the Towne, & by this meanes in lesse then halfe an howre the whole Towne was set on fier, and after burnt: except the Church & Court-house, which sometime belonged to the Earle of Deuon-shire.

But marke what followed: men would haue thought, that vpon a Market day, when euery street was so well replenished with people, frō all parts, there had been help enough quickly to haue quenche the flambe thereof, hauing also the commodite of a ryuer neere adioyning: But ye came not so to passe for they had neyther hookes, nor buckets fit for such seruice, which all other wise and discreete Citizens doe politiquely prouide against such casualties, which might haue been a meanes of their preseruation.

Notwithstanding, it is sayd that the chiefe of the towne had often been in hand, to make such prouision: but neuer brought it to effect, for howsoeuer it was well motioned, it was ill remembred, the want whereof they now felt to their great sorrow and cost: for whether it were couetousnesse, or negligence, or both: which in these dayes is the cause of great euill, it is certaine they were destitute of such engines, the misse whereof when they found, then all too late they bewailed their approued follie: which was vndoubtedly Gods iust Iudgement for their iniquities: by the which let all other Townes take example.

Whereby we may gather, it is not in mans power to preuent with strength of hād, the least plague which ỳ Lord doth purpose to bring on any place. For you shall vnderstand that all that day the wind being at West-South-west, & blowing extreame hard, the power thereof was so great, high, and vehement, that it inforced the kindled flambe to rise most fiercely

ly, beating the ſame toward the Towne in moſt outragious ſoꝛt; ſo that, by the time the people with all expedition had gathered vnto that place to quench the furie thereof, beholde ere they wiſt the fier had taken hould in the Principall place of the Towne, and by that time they came backe againe and got thither, they perceaued other houſes to burne in like maner: ſo that while manye were buſie in helping their neighbours, their owne houſes was in as ill a caſe.

Then began the crie to grow moſt grieuous in euery part of the Towne, the mighty winde ſtill increaſing the furie of the inraged fier: here ſtoode one man crying foꝛ help, there another, another, and another: wringing their handes and making great lamentation: moꝛe and moꝛe the number increaſed, inſomuch that the people were ſo amazed, they knew not which way to turne, noꝛ where the moſt neede was.

The fier increaſed ſo faſt, grew ſo vehement, and ſpread ſo far, that at laſt there was about 400 houſes on fier at once: ſo that euery man was glad to ſhift foꝛ himſelfe, and ſo neere as he could to ſaue his owne life, but all in vaine, foꝛ he whichnen now reſted in hope, his houſe ſhoulde eſcape the danger, in the turning of a hand, had all on fier about his eares, the winde beating the flambe in their faces: all which came ſtill ſo ſodenly, that there was no remedy to be had foꝛ the ſame.

Moſt dreadfull was the noyſe which was then heard in euery corner and ſtreet of the Towne, women pitiouſly ſcreeking, maydens bitterly crying, and children roaring out of meaſure, the mother running to ſaue her children, the husband foꝛ the wife, neighboꝛ, calling foꝛ neighboꝛ, friend, foꝛ friend, while they were beaten out of the towne with raging flames of fier. Foꝛ ſo extreame, and outragious did the fier paſſe from houſe to houſe, there was no leking to ſaue their goods: no way to preſerue them from deſtruction, foꝛ all the Cloth in the market, wares in their ſhops, goods and houſhold ſtuffe, money, plate, apparell and bedding, yea all was burnt and

nothing

nothing saued: and which is more to be lamented, diuers
men aduen∣tured the hazard them selues so farre within the daunger
of the fier, to saue some part of their goodes, that they neuer
returned backe againe, but were there most piteously burned
to death, and consumed to ashes: Diuers of them being of the
best men in the Towne: Many children and other feeble per∣sons was burnt in the houses, yea hogges and other Cattell in
stables and backe places, with all their corne and victuall.

Among the rest there was an old blinde man burnt, named
Nicholas Hartnell whom his friendes had brought forth of
his den, & layde him for his better safetie in the Market house,
but while they were making shift for themselues in some other
sort, before they could returne againe, the poore man was by
fier turned into ashes:

There was in like manner one Lawd and his wife, which
were founde lying in the streete arme in arme burnt to death,
but not quite consumed. At what time there was found ly∣ing beneeth them fiue Pounds in Gold, with the which as it
seemed they sought to flie away: But being smothered by the
smoke and and fiers flame, they hadde their passage wofully
stopped: there was found the sculles and bones of many more.

Likewise one Reeues wife a woman of good repu∣tati∣, was
burnt in the streete, and also one widow Proude before the could
get out of her owne doores suffered the like tormenting death.

Then well apaide was that man, that had the benefit to kepe
himselfe and his familie from danger: so that for the haste they
made to get away into the fields, they ouerthrue one another
bowne one another in their passage forth.

The Tyles by the heate of the fier, flew crashing from the
houses, like as if hee were accompany of warre-chargers that
were riding against some towne: And againe to heare the
dolefull cracke, when the timbers fell to the ground, might
and might, made the deepe hearts of the people to tremble for
feare. When in short space after, they saw whole rowes

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ses tumbling to the grounde, after they had a while stoode tottering too and fro with the mighty blastes of the South west winde.

A; what time it was hard to say, whether their sorowe, or feare was greatest, when they beheld their goodes burnt to ashes and heard the thundering noyse of the falling houses, which caused the firme earth to quake and tremble vnder their feete.

Truely whosoeuer hath entred into consideration hereof, must needes acknowledge, their case to be most lamentable, and their sorowe vnspeakeable, during the time of this terrible fier: the rage whereof lasted not aboue one houer and a halfe, and yet in that small space, had it burnt to ashes, (as I saye before) aboue the number of Foure Hundred houses: most of them belonging to the wealthiest men in the Towne, with all the goodes that were in them, so that all the substantiall citizens, were constrained to lye in the fieldes with their wiues & children, and to lodge themselues on the cold ground, that in the morning had theyre of behoue to get into some other their sodaine wracke, and hard fortune.

Therefore it is a vaine thing to trust in the vncertainty of worldly riches, which being gotten with trauell, and kept with care, notwithstanding some lost, bring in hazard of a Thousand dangers. And therfore most happy are they, which according to the counsaile of the holy Ghost, doe lay vp theyr treasure in heauen, where it can perish by no perill, that can happen, but both rust remayne safe vnder the keeping of the Lord God of hostes.

Before the fier was fully quenched, and diligent search made where any more lurking as it is verye credibly reported of Hundreds persons of them about, of the which number (as I haue alredy mentioned) diuers were found dead in y streetes, shoppes and houses. I meane in the place where Poppe, and Iuie lay before theyre

The reſidue of the woefull people remaining yet aliue being ouer burdened with exceedme ſorrow, runs vp and downe the fields like diſtraught and frantick men, being driuen (as before is mentioned) to ſhroud themſelues vnder trees & hedges, lying on the bare grounde: moreouer they are ſo greatly pi-ſtreſt for lacke of food, that they ſeeme to eath mans fleſhe more like Spirits and Ghoſtes then liuing creatures: Likewiſe it is by wiſe men verily thought that the loſſes of this Towne, will not be recouered againe vnder Three or Foure hundred Thouſand Pounds.

But you ſhall vnderſtande, that notwithſtanding all the fyre of this conſuming fier, there is yet ſome Twenty houſes preſerued, the dwellings of poore and ſillie men: And certaine almes houſes, which is a moſt rare and ſtrange thinge: for as diuers Marchants of this Citie is credibly certified by letters, that the fier inuiron'd thoſe ſillie Cottages on euery ſide, burning other houſes to the ground which ſtood about them, and yet had they no hurt at all.

Surely if we ſhoulde enter into conſideration hereof, we could not chuſe but confeſſe, that this was the onely worke of God, to make his power manifeſt to men, as hee did in delyuering the Three children out of the fierie furnace, euen ſo did he preſerue thoſe poore perſons with their houſes and goodes, for ſome ſpeciall cauſe beſt knowne to himſelfe according to that holy canticle ſung by the bleſſed Virgin Marie: he hath filled the hungry with good thinges, but the rich he ſent emptie away.

It is ſaid of ſome y this was a iuſt punishment of god brought vpon that Towne, for their vnmercifulneſſe, & ſmall regard of the poore, which were dayly ſeene to dye and periſh in their ſtreetes for lacke of reliefe: poore Lazarus laye vnregarded at the rich mans gate, and could not get one little morſell of meate to cherish his hungry heart: therefore (if it were ſo) yet was the iuſt iudgement of God, that they which through couetouſnes

tousnesse would not part from any thinge, should sodenly bee all: For there was not so much as one peece of Timber left, of all those Foure Hundzed houses, but all were consumed to ashes, except some fewe chimneys, and stone walles which are monuments of the Townes ruine.

Whereby it is come to passe, that those rich Merchants, that earst scorned to geeue a poore mans house with his prester, is nowe glade to request their favour for the most coyner in their Cottage, where they may remaine in this their misery which may bee a good warning for all other men of the like abilitie, how they contemne and dispise the poore members of Christ houlding them in disdaine, whom God hath oppressed with powertie.

O famous London, thou that flowest in wealth, and abondest in Riches: Thou which art the chiefe Ladye citie of this Land, whose fame soundeth through al Christian Kingdoms, cast thy cleere eyes on this ruinous Towne: consider her fall, and pitie her distresse, learne by her calamitie to looke into thy selfe, examine thy conscience and see whether thou hast deserued the like plague or no: giue thou example of true contrition, and as thou art chiefe in glorie, bee thou chiefe in grace, that god may long and many yeares vphould thy prosperous estate.

Yea let all the goodly Cities and Townes, which beautifies the Westerne plat of this flourishing Iland, looke vpon their woefull Sister Tewerton, who lately did braue it with the best, and thought her selfe nothing inferiour to the fayrest: But nowe she sitteth clad in mournefull weedes, hauing her fayre heade couered with pale ashes, her brauery conuerted to beggerie, her glory to disgrace, and all her mirth into mone: so that there is nothing seen but lamentation and complaint. Ah Tewerton well may thy friendes crie out there (as sometime greate Kinges did ouer Babilon) saying, alas alas thy

ruine

proper Towne of Teuerton, that wealthie and rich Towne, in an houer is thy Iudgement come: thy Marchants may now weepe and mourne, for no man buyeth ware in thee anye more.

Consider this thou faire Citie of Excester, thou which art next neighboure this distressed Towne, which hast (as it were) the smoke of her fier, yet before thy face, and her lamentations ringing lowde in thy eares; pitie her braute happe, that knowest not what miserie hangeth ouer thy owne head.

And let me speake vnto thee, thou Towne of Plymouth, whose stately buildinges ouer-peereth the hilles, casting their prospects vpon the murmuring waues: take warning by Teuerton and turne thy manye vices into vertues, least God turne from thee his great and mighty blessinges.

Stone is the cause of manye sorrowes: and vnspeakeable ye ground-worke of all inconsolable griefe: yet if wee shoulde thinke, that the people of Teuerton were the greatest transgressors, because they haue suffered the greatest punishment, of any towne in the West: we should thinke much amisse: for as our Sauiour Christ saith vnto the Iewes, suppose not that those on whome the Tower of Siloe fell, were greater sinners then the rest, but except you repent, you shall likewise perish. So say I to you and al other Cities and Townes in England, thinke not that the Inhabitants of Teuerton did surpasse all other in wickednesse, because they onelie all felt the woe: but if they please God panish vs, for our transgression, that beholding those fall, we may feare to offende, and learne by their miserie, per to owne speedy amendment. For what is he which passeth by this Towne, and earst knew the flourishing state thereof, seeing now her lamentable spoile: but many be prouoked to crie with Ieremie, and saye of Teuerton, as hee spake of Ierusalem: Alasse, how desolate sitteth this towne, that sometime was full of people? how is shee become lyke a widowe, sorow full, beautie, and remorcelesse, which lately was

had in good regard, and famous among all her familiers: he
vnexpectedly in the night, & her teares run downe her cheeks
in great abundance.

But it is easie for al men to say this: to shake their heads,
and crie alack alack: But a hard matter to make benefit ther-
of, and to be warned by their neighbors harmes: Marrie
seeming let all distressed people know, that wholsomer sych
fully trusteth in God, shall neuer be forsaken: well may they
sustaine sorrow, but they shall not be left in miserie.

The Lord that brought them low, can raise them again a-
last, as it is manifest by Iobes affliction. The refuge God
graunt we may take patiently those fatherly corrections
which he layeth vpon vs: knowing that all the miseries
of this life, is not worthy of the least hope, which is
prepared in Heauen for the sonns of men: Vn-
to the which place Christ Iesus bring
vs, that by his blood so dearely
bought vs. Amen.

FINIS.